



# good**neighbours** handbook

a group of volunteers who recognise the benefits  
of helping neighbours



Household repairs • Gardening • Befriending • Letter writing • Form filling • Practical help • Transport



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## Introduction

We would all like to live in an area that has a sense of community and where we look out for our neighbours. Many people already do that informally for those that live nearby and need a little help to remain well and content in their own homes. In some communities groups of volunteers have come together to create a Good Neighbours Network for everyone in the area. This helps foster a feeling of wellbeing not only for the residents who benefit from the help they receive, but also gives the volunteers a sense of purpose and a way of giving something back to the community.

Being part of a Good Neighbours Network enables local people to be involved and empowered in their own communities. This is very much part of the Big Society programme announced by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Agreement.

This handbook has drawn upon good practice to explain what a Good Neighbours Network is. It explains the advantages of setting up a Good Neighbours Network, how they work and how to make it a reality. It also gives useful information and sample documents to help you develop a Good Neighbours Network in your area. We would like to thank: Suffolk ACRE, South Gloucestershire CVS and Yate Volunteers Bureau for their contributions.

If you are thinking about setting up a Good Neighbours Network in your area and would like some advice and support please contact the Community Engagement Officer on 01454 868267 or email [cchengagement@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:cchengagement@southglos.gov.uk).





## What is a Good Neighbours Network?

A Good Neighbours Network is run by a group of volunteers who recognise the benefits of helping neighbours by doing small tasks. The network can result in a better quality of life for both the volunteers and the people supported by the service.

The network is co-ordinated by a core of volunteers who take it in turns to marry up requests for support with an available volunteer who has offered to do the task requested. There are a number of existing local Good Neighbours Networks and many successful schemes running across the country. Hawksbury Upton runs a successful car sharing scheme organised by the community.

If you are considering setting up a Good Neighbours Network in South Gloucestershire this handbook will help you to build local interest, recruit volunteers, understand the responsibilities of the steering group and the work needed to administer a Good Neighbours Network.

## What Can a Good Neighbours Network Achieve?

A Good Neighbours Network is for the benefit of the whole community although it tends to be older people and young parents who make most use of the help available. Volunteers are encouraged to offer their services only for activities that they would feel happy and confident to carry out. The services you would like your network to offer is up to you but listed below are some examples offered by other schemes:

- **Household repairs** such as changing a light bulb, fixing a dripping tap, checking a smoke alarm, moving furniture, or hanging a picture could fall within the scheme if skills are available.
- **Gardening** Good Neighbours Networks can offer a one-off tidy up for someone who is physically unable to manage it themselves.
- **Befriending** on a regular basis is an extremely welcome and worthwhile practice which can benefit not only the older person and newly bereaved people but also people new to the area.
- **Letter writing** and **form filling** can be a problem for people in many sectors of the community and help can be much appreciated.
- **Practical help** such as shopping, collecting pensions and prescriptions, occasional cooking and meal delivery are also in demand.



- **Transport:** Some networks have volunteers who can give people occasional lifts in their car. If you live in a rural area that does not have good transport links this may be something that you wish to consider. It will however increase the amount of administration the scheme will need. This is the only service for which we recommend a charge can be made, of up to 40 pence per mile to compensate the driver for fuel, wear and tear.



## The Advantages of Volunteering

Volunteering brings many benefits to everyone in the community but especially to those that volunteer. These include:

- Giving something back to the local community
- A chance to gain skills and experience
- A pathway into work
- A chance to make friends and new contacts in your community
- A chance to have fun and have new experiences
- Increased self esteem and confidence
- A chance to make a difference or be an advocate for positive change
- Personal pride and fulfilment – the feeling of being valued
- Improving volunteers' health and well-being



## The Big Society

The **Big Society** forms part of the legislative programme of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Agreement. It aims to create a climate that empowers local people and communities to build a big society that will take power away from politicians and give it to people. The priorities are to:

- Give communities more power
- Encourage people to take an active role in their communities
- Transfer power from central to local government
- Support co-ops, mutual associations, charities and social enterprises
- Publish government data

Being part of a Good Neighbours Network enables local people to be involved and empowered in their own communities.

## What you will need to do

Before setting up a scheme in your community you need to understand the specific needs of your community and you will need sufficient enthusiasm to make the good neighbours network a reality. You will need to:

- Assess the level of demand for a network; contact local people and discuss.
- Raise a team of potential volunteers and call a public meeting to discuss the network.
- Set up a steering group to run the network locally.
- Identify start-up funding, though local funding, sponsorship or by seeking a small start up grant. This will pay for a mobile phone, insurance, Criminal Records Bureau Checks (CRB), stationery and publicity. The amount you will need will depend on the size of your network. The average costs of setting up a network with 30 volunteers is £1000.
- Confirm who will become the Duty Officers to co-ordinate requests for help and volunteers. This may also be the steering group.



- Train all volunteers; confirm how you will circulate requests, how the network works and what is expected from their role. If required, organise additional training session on specific issues such as benefits awareness, falls prevention awareness, safeguarding and community driving.

Information and practical help on all of these is available from the Community Care and Housing Community Engagement Officer at South Gloucestershire Council, details on the back cover.

## Setting up a Group

The first thing is to make sure the community is interested in coming together to develop a Good Neighbours Network. You will also need a local champion; this could be you, a local councillor or a person that already does a lot in the community. It may be useful to contact the parish council, if you have one, to keep them informed of your plans and get their support.

The easiest way to find out if you have enough interest in your area is to deliver a questionnaire (see page 18) to each household which gives people the opportunity to say what services they would use, if they were on offer, and to give people an opportunity to volunteer and say the ways that they are able to help. The questionnaire could be included with a local newsletter. The best way to maximise the number of responses you receive is to collect them from each household. To do this you may need to recruit some help with distributing the questionnaire. This will be time consuming and the alternative is to leave collection boxes in local halls and shops. But this may significantly reduce the number of responses you receive. You will need to evaluate this information to assess the level of need and number of volunteers.

Using the information gathered from the questionnaires you can call a meeting of interested parties to raise awareness and form the steering group and field any questions that volunteers may have. This will be an opportunity to get the message across that no volunteer is expected to do everything and no volunteer is expected to be available all of the time.



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and no volunteer is expected to be available all of  
the time.**





## How the Good Neighbours Network Operates

There are many ways that you can become involved in a Good Neighbours Network depending on how much time you have and what level of commitment you can make to the scheme. The following pages describe the roles that will be needed to operate a network.

### Steering Group

This group is responsible for running the network and ensuring that it is a success. If setting up the network from scratch you will be responsible for:

- Publicising the activities of the network
- Recruiting and volunteers
- Constituting the group
- Appointing a chairperson, treasurer and secretary
- Making sure the necessary systems are in place
- Arranging training and making sure everyone knows what needs to happen and what they are doing

To become an organisation in its own right the group needs to be 'constituted'; each group will have to have its own constitution that sets out who the group is, the rules the group has and what the group aims to do. For this type of organisation this is a simple document. A sample constitution can be found on [page 20](#).

You will also have to decide who has the different roles of Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary. This may be called a steering group or management committee. Don't worry: these may sound grand but are usually simple and manageable. For example:

- Chairperson ensures that meetings happen in an orderly way so that everything that needs to be discussed is discussed, that everyone gets to have their say and that they keep within the allocated time.
- Treasurer looks after the money and keeps records to show how any money has been spent. If you have a grant the Treasurer will need to provide a report on how the money has been spent.
- Secretary will need to ensure the meetings happen and take and produce the minutes.



These are the essential roles highlighting some of the tasks. The more members you have on the group the easier it is to share tasks and get things done eg Duty Co-ordinator and fund raising. Once the network has been set up members will decide the frequency of meetings to ensure the network is a success. This will include an annual general meeting for all members. The steering group members may also be duty officers and can also volunteer to complete requests for help.

For more details see the following documents:

a	Good Neighbours Network Questionnaire	Page 18
b	Constitution	Page 20
c	Volunteer Information Record	Page 22
d	Useful telephone Numbers	Page 23

## Duty Officers or Organisers

You will need a pool of people prepared to take the more active role of Duty Officer. On a rota basis with other duty officers they will take it in turns to staff the mobile phone and marry up any requests for help with volunteers that are able to complete the request. There will also be a little paperwork to complete and the Duty Officer will need to be available to advise volunteers if they come across anything unusual or unexpected. The Duty Officers may also be a member of the steering group and can also volunteer to complete requests for help.

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f	Duty Office Rota	Page 25
g	Record of Requests Received	Page 26
h	Volunteer Availability	Page 26

## Volunteers

Everyone involved in the scheme is a volunteer. The support offered by volunteers will vary from one individual to another depending on what they feel they can offer and the time that they have available.

You might be willing to help people in your street or perhaps just offer a service like hedge cutting or lawn mowing. Maybe you can offer your services in a flexible way but only at certain times. Some will have a variety of roles and others may just do one element. Volunteers that offer to help and complete tasks for neighbours are essential.

If you volunteer you will give up a little of your time to help someone that needs help and lives nearby.



You will let the scheme know the things that you are prepared to help with and the time of day you are available. When the duty officer receives a request that matches your commitment to the scheme they will call you. You will be asked whether or not you are able to help. If you are able to help the duty officer will pass on to you all of the details of the request. You can use the Volunteer Record Sheet ([see i, page 30](#)) to make sure you have all the details you need. When you have completed the task you will need to let the duty officer know that you have finished the task, so that they can finalise the paperwork. Each duty officer and each volunteer will need to agree how they will make contact after the task is finished. This may be by phone or you may complete the Volunteer Record of Sheet.

Each volunteer will receive an introduction to the scheme which will include an information pack to enable them to help residents.

## Recruiting Volunteers

**However you recruit volunteers to your network you will need to make sure that they are suitable volunteers. If you are starting the group and have received a number of responses to a questionnaire you may want to get everyone together socially to meet and to explain the scheme, what it means to be a volunteer and the processes they have to go through. This also gives you an opportunity to complete CRB forms with all volunteers and to assess whether they are suitable to be a volunteer.**

When recruiting members individually we recommend you have a brief meeting to interview the volunteer where you can assess their suitability to volunteer, explain what being a volunteer will mean and discuss the need to complete the CRB forms. Once the CRB disclosure is assessed it will be returned and will either show no previous convictions or be positive and record convictions. You will need to assess any convictions ([see m, page 31](#)).

When you are happy that you have completed the necessary checks welcome the volunteer to the group and give them a volunteer's information pack, an identity card and introductory letter.

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## Setting up a Bank Account

Setting up a community bank account is quite straightforward and is essential to help keep the network's books in order. A community bank account of this type will normally offer free banking, and it is normal practice for a cheque to require two signatories from the Good Neighbours Network, such as the Treasurer and Secretary, or the Chairperson and Secretary. Signatories to the account will need to provide identification when opening an account.

All of the High Street banks should be able to set up a community bank account that will suit your needs but check that there will be no banking charges.

## Insurance Cover

Public Liability Insurance protects the organisation from claims by third parties, including service users and members of the public, for death, illness, loss, injury, or accident caused by the negligence of the organisation. It generally covers anybody other than employees who come into contact with the organisation.

You will need to get a quote for your scheme but small voluntary sector groups generally pay around £150-200 per year (February 2011). There are many different companies that offer this type of insurance. You could seek advice from an insurance broker or by doing a quick search like 'community group insurance' on the internet.

## Estimated start-up costs for a Network with 30 volunteers

Potential Costs	£
Mobile phone pay as you go package (one phone & call costs)	100.00
CRB Checks (£20 per check)	600.00
Public liability insurance (one year)	200.00
Stationery and publicity (including simple ID cards)	100.00
Total	1000.00

All estimated costs are correct at the time of publishing February 2011



## Sources of Funding

There are many ways to fund the start up costs of a Good Neighbours Network. You may want to do some fund raising activities. Alternatively you may want to apply for a start-up grant for a Good Neighbours Network. These organisations might award small grants:

- **Awards for All (England):** Fund small projects that involve people in their community. Grants between £300 and £10,000 are available. [www.awardsforall.org.uk](http://www.awardsforall.org.uk)
- **Nationwide Foundation:** For projects supporting people to live independently. Grants available up to £5,000. [www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk](http://www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk)
- **Quartet Foundation:** have several funds that support small voluntary and community organisations to make a difference to people that are disadvantaged or isolated. [www.quartetcf.org.uk](http://www.quartetcf.org.uk)
- **South Gloucestershire Safer Stronger Initiative Fund** All voluntary and community sector organisations that are actively engaged with the Safer and Stronger Community Groups, (SSCG) are welcome to apply.
- **South Gloucestershire Council Revenue Grant:** Small (revenue) grants are awarded to local groups to develop projects and provide activities that meet local needs. [www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk)
- **Police Grants Community Trust** supports projects and schemes that work towards reducing crime and the fear of crime in the communities where we work and live. [www.avonandsomerset.police.uk](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk)
- **Parish Grants:** If you live in an area that has a parish council you may be able to obtain a small grant. Each parish that awards grants have their own criteria and timescales.

For more information on funding sources contact: South Glos CVS [www.cvs-sg.org.uk](http://www.cvs-sg.org.uk), visit a local library and use funder finder or access Grantet [www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk)

Full links to web addresses are available at [www.southglos.gov.uk/goodneighbours](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/goodneighbours)

Once a scheme has started it needs to be self-sustaining so you will need to think about fund raising such as an annual event. Some schemes have organised bring-and-buy sales, soon after Christmas, when people can effectively swap unwanted gifts.

This information is correct as at February 2011



## Criminal Record Checks

South Gloucestershire Council strongly recommends that all Good Neighbours Network organisers should carry out CRB checks on potential volunteers, including themselves. This is because volunteers could potentially be working with vulnerable adults or children. Having a CRB check builds confidence in the scheme and in the volunteers.

A CRB Disclosure will reveal if the person has convictions that would make you consider them unsuitable to be a volunteer, such as convictions for theft, fraud, dishonesty and violence, including that of a sexual nature. Information on dealing with CRB disclosures is on [page 31](#).

You can apply for an enhanced CRB check through South Gloucestershire Children's Playlink [www.childrensplaylink.org](http://www.childrensplaylink.org), who offer a CRB disclosure service. The cost of an enhanced CRB check for vulnerable adults is £20.00 (February 2011).

You may receive a CRB check that has a positive disclosure of a previous offence, or a resident that wishes to volunteer but knows that a CRB check will disclose an offence. You will need to consider the nature of each disclosure balanced with the tasks the volunteer will be doing before refusing or agreeing to use a volunteer. Certain offences may lead to you not wanting to include a volunteer in the network but other offences may not be relevant so it may be possible for that person to volunteer. It is important that as a steering group you are prepared for this eventuality and treat everyone fairly and equitably.

In October 2009 the Vetting and Barring Scheme was introduced to help prevent unsuitable people from undertaking paid or volunteer work with children or vulnerable adults. To oversee the scheme a body called the ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) has been created. The ISA make decisions over who should be barred from working with vulnerable people. These decisions are legally binding so a barred person must not undertake certain roles under any circumstances. Failing to comply could lead to prosecution or prison. The coalition government elected in May 2010 has halted plans to roll out the ISA and have committed to 'review the criminal records and vetting and barring regime and scale it back to common sense levels'.

There are a lot of things to consider when making a CRB assessment. To help you do this there is a risk assessment model on [page 31](#).  
For more information: [www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/](http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/).



## Safeguarding

Both adults and children can be considered as 'vulnerable' and should a volunteer have concerns about the treatment of residents that they visit they need to be able to deal with their concerns in an appropriate way. The following information aims to explain this in simple terms and give you information on where you can find out more.

A vulnerable adult is someone aged 18 or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental health or other disability, age or illness. They may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Abuse is when someone does or says something to someone which harms them and makes them upset and scared. The abused person may not know how to get the help they need. Abuse can be a single act or continue over months or even years. It can be accidental or deliberate. Just because there is no injury doesn't mean there is no abuse.

Abuse can take many forms: physical, financial, emotional, sexual, discriminatory abuse and neglect. Anyone can be an abuser including: a relative, friend, neighbour, paid carer, volunteer or stranger.

If you have any concerns about a child (under 18 years) or adult who is or may be being abused you must report it immediately:

Adult Abuse 01454 868007, email [csodesk@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:csodesk@southglos.gov.uk),  
[www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk)

Child abuse 01454 868008, email [cis@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:cis@southglos.gov.uk)  
[www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk)

## Keeping Information Confidential

Each Good Neighbours Network will collect personal and sensitive information about both volunteers and the individuals who request help. It is important that all personal and sensitive information is kept securely and confidentially and that only those who need access have it. The steering group will need to agree how this is managed and ensures that it is adhered to by all volunteers.



## Monitoring & Evaluating Your Scheme

Once you've set up your project you will need to make sure that everything is going well and that you consider opportunities for development or improvement. You can do this by monitoring the ongoing activity and evaluating the whole network. These are two separate activities.

Monitoring means regularly collecting information on your project and analysing it to see how things are going. To do this, you can look at facts such as how much money you have spent, the number of participative volunteers and the number of contacts you received. You can also consider less measurable things, like whether the project is running smoothly and if people involved are satisfied. Proper monitoring will make it easy to evaluate. It will also give you a basis to make decisions on how to go forward and help highlight any gaps in the network and inform any changes you make along the way if you find something isn't going well.

Evaluation is a review of the whole project, looking at its overall value and effect. It usually takes place when the project has been running for some time. You can use the information you've collected during monitoring. Doing an evaluation will help you see how and where your project has been successful. It will let you see how well funds have been used, and what the benefits of your network have been to those involved. You can use this information to improve future projects.

For more information on evaluation: [www.evaluationtrust.org/tools/toolkit](http://www.evaluationtrust.org/tools/toolkit)

## Good Neighbours Network Identity Cards

Identity Cards are strongly recommended for all volunteers. They give peace of mind to people using the service. If your scheme decides to use them each volunteer will need to show them each time they visit.



## Emergency Planning

Incidents of severe wind and weather can catch everyone off guard. Members of a Good Neighbours Network may be asked by a Parish or Local Council to help develop an action plan to deal with an emergency at local level. It could mean keeping residents informed during a crisis, and helping to bridge the gap between the onset of an emergency and the arrival of the Emergency Services.

### Good Neighbours Networks could be asked to:

- Carry out a risk assessment of the parish, and identify people, perhaps living alone, who may be particularly vulnerable.
- Establish a communication network within the parish that does not rely on electricity or land-based telephones.
- Establish a skills bank in the community – First Aiders, electricians, plumbers, ex-service personnel etc.
- Identify potential places of safety in the area or locality.
- Ensure that each Good Neighbours Network volunteer has a working torch, a battery-powered or wind up radio, some method of heating food and boiling water, a thermos flask, plus some stand-by tinned or dried food.
- Encourage householders to have door-boards at hand and ready to fit if there is a danger of flooding.

In most areas the local or parish council will take the lead in emergency planning doing things like keeping guard on roads or path clearing, but members of a Good Neighbours Network can be of great help.

For more information email [emergencyplanning@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:emergencyplanning@southglos.gov.uk)

## Let's Make It Happen

This handbook gives you an outline of what you can achieve if you develop a Good Neighbours Network.

It also gives you the information and tools to help you set up a scheme in your neighbourhood. If you would like help at any stage please telephone the Community Engagement Officer 01454 868267 or email [cchengagement@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:cchengagement@southglos.gov.uk).



## Samples and Information

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The following pages contain examples of the types of documents that you should find useful in organising a successful Good Neighbours Network.

You may photo copy these pages if you wish, or if you would prefer, we can send these documents to you by email as a Word document so that you can amend them for your use.

Please contact the Community Engagement Officer by email [cengagement@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:cengagement@southglos.gov.uk) letting us know exactly which document you would like.

If you would prefer paper versions of any of these documents please call **01454 86 8267**

Or write to the Community Engagement Officer, Partnerships and Planning, Community Care & Housing, PO Box 2083, The Council Offices, Castle Street, Thornbury BS35 9BR

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## Good Neighbours Network Questionnaire

Volunteers in this area are considering launching a Good Neighbours Network aimed at helping to make life easier for people in this community, especially older people, although the scheme could help all age groups. You may need help from the scheme, or you may like to volunteer to help others, or you may want to volunteer and use the scheme too.

The scheme will revolve around a group of volunteers who can help in a number of ways: by checking a smoke alarm or changing a light bulb, befriending someone who is lonely or tidying the garden. There are many other ways in which the scheme could help people.

### How the Scheme Works

1. The organisers have a mobile phone, which individuals wanting help from the scheme call.
2. They are backed up by a team of volunteers who agree to help in one or more ways listed in the questionnaire overleaf.
3. The telephone number of the scheme is published throughout the area and any resident, of any age, can call and ask for help of the kind mentioned in the questionnaire.
4. The duty officers take it in turns to staff the phone and marry up the requests for help with an appropriate volunteer.

Please fill in the questionnaire overleaf and keep it by the door ready for collection or post it to

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Thank you

**Would you use the scheme for help? If so what help do you need?**

Please circle your answer

Shopping	Yes	No
Some one to talk to	Yes	No
Collection of prescriptions	Yes	No
Minor household repairs	Yes	No
One off garden tidy	Yes	No
Form filling	Yes	No
Help with pets	Yes	No
Occasional transport (40 pence per mile)	Yes	No
Other (please specify)		

**Would you like to volunteer as a good neighbour? What could you help with?**

Please circle your answer

Collecting shopping	Yes	No
Befriending/advocacy	Yes	No
Collecting prescriptions	Yes	No
Minor household repairs/assistance	Yes	No
Other (please specify)		

**If you tell us who you are and where you live we can contact you when the scheme is up and running**

Name	
Telephone	
Address	
Email	

## Constitution

This is the constitution for

*'your area'*

Good Neighbours Network.

### 1. Status

The organisation is a not for profit organisation. No member is entitled to any payment for services rendered but may be reimbursed any reasonable expenditure incurred in providing such services.

### 2. Aims

To provide contact and support to vulnerable people living in 'your area'

*'your area'*

### 3. Purpose

- The network will provide practical support for any member of the community who is in need and is unable to help themselves.
- The network will recruit and maintain a bank of volunteers to help offer services
- The network will raise funds to be able to offer services

### 4. Members

The Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer of the Group will be agreed by the members at a general meeting immediately following its formation and where appropriate voted on annually at the annual general meeting. The committee will consist of the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, with provision for co-opting members onto the committee as necessary. The Steering Group shall make all arrangements for the provision of services to meet the Aims of the organisation.

## 5. Annual General Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held in ..... (month) of each year.

A notice of the meeting including date, time and place will be sent by the Secretary to all members of ..... 'your area' Good Neighbours Network at least two weeks in advance.

The minimum number for a general meeting and all other meetings will be one third of the membership. Should a vote be necessary to make a decision, each committee member will have one vote, with the Chair having a casting vote in the event of a tie.

## 6. Bank Account

All funds of the organisation shall be held in a bank account opened in the name of the organisation, apart from a cash float of up to £50 to be held by the treasurer to enable the payment of minor expenditure items. Cheques on the account shall be signed by two authorised signatories as nominated by the Steering Group.

## 7. Accounts

The Treasurer will keep an accurate record of all income and expenditure and will provide a full account for the Annual Meeting. The accounts will be audited annually by an independent Auditor.

## 8. Winding Up

Should the Group cease to exist any remaining funds will be passed to the organisers of to be used for the benefit of ..... in ..... and the surrounding area.

Confirmed and adopted at a meeting of the Steering Group held on:

Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Volunteer Information

Each volunteer will complete an information sheet when signing up to the scheme.

Name			
Address			
Postcode		Tel Number	
Email			

Please circle the appropriate age range

Age	Under 20	21-40	41-60	Over 60
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Please circle the times you are available

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
am						
pm						
evening						

Type of Volunteering you can do Please tick for yes	
Befriend on a regular basis	
Sit with someone	
Write a letter for someone	
Help fill in non legal forms	
Walk a dog	
Care for a pet during illness	
Deliver a meal	
Cook or prepare an emergency meal or snack	
Prepare a home for someone coming home from hospital	
Small jobs like changing a light bulb	
Occasional light housework	
Move furniture within the house	
General garden tidy up	
Picking up prescriptions	
Shopping errands	
Hospital or doctors appointments (would you be able to wait?)	
Outings	
Longer journeys/trips to airports	
Could you assist a wheelchair user (would the wheelchair fit in your car?)	

Would you be willing to be a duty officer? Please tick for yes
This involves taking over the scheme's mobile phone once every 'x' weeks and taking calls for help from people in your community. You will then be required to match a suitable volunteer to the task requested. You would be shown how to use the phone and would learn techniques on dealing with callers effectively.
Do you have any special skills or experience to offer?

Please return this form with two passport sized photos for your identity badge.

## d

## Useful Telephone Numbers

There may be times when volunteers receive a request that cannot be handled by the scheme. The duty office will need to decide whether to contact a statutory body or another organisation.

Here are a few useful numbers but there is a more comprehensive list of numbers available in a separate document.

Organisation	Telephone No.
Age Concern	01454 858750
Alzheimer's Society	0117 967 2975
Care & Repair	0117 904 2277
Citizens Advice Bureau	0844 826 9688
Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport	01454 868529
Kingswood Community Transport	0117 9616016
Yate, Sodbury & District Community Transport	01454 228706
Cruse Bereavement Care	0844 477 9400
Living (dlc) – information advice on products that will help you live independently	0117 965 3651
Mind (mental health information line)	0845 766 0163
National Missing Persons Helpline	0500 700 700
NHS Direct	0845 4647
NSPCC child protection helpline	0808 800 5000
Princess Royal Trust for Carers	0117 939 2562
Shelterline (housing problems)	0808 800 4444
South Gloucestershire Council – Adult care	01454 868007
South Gloucestershire Council - children	01454 868008
South Gloucestershire Council - streetcare	01454 868000
Survive – domestic violence	0117 961 2999
Wellaware – information service	0808 808 5252
Womankind – helpline for women with mental health issues	0845 4582914

## Guidelines and Information for Duty Officers

### On taking a call which is a request for help

1. Always have a pen, paper and Good Neighbours Network information by the phone.
2. Repeat and write down the name, address and phone number of the caller. Get directions.
3. If you are unsure of the suitability of a request say you will discuss it with the committee and ring the caller back.
4. Don't be afraid to say "No, it's not our remit", but refer the caller to Community Care and Housing Department at the Council or another agency, if applicable.
5. Always try to leave a caller with a positive feeling about the scheme. Explain what the scheme can do and if it cannot help, say why not.

### On telephoning a volunteer

1. Be friendly, cheerful, optimistic and encouraging.
2. Keep smiling because your smile will be reflected in your voice.
3. Be clear about the task to be done.
4. Accept a refusal cheerfully so that you can ask again in the future.

**Don't** put too big a responsibility on the volunteer.

**Don't** give out confidential details about the caller until the volunteer has agreed to tackle the task.

**Do** try to break a complex request into manageable tasks.

### When a volunteer has agreed to help

1. Give them all the necessary information.
2. Ask the volunteer to report back after the task is completed.
3. Note all details on the record forms.



## g

## Record of Requests Received

The Duty Officer needs to record all the requests for help that the Good Neighbours Network receives. This includes the name of the volunteer appointed and the date the request is completed. This is also a useful tool for collecting all of the necessary information when the initial request is made.

Record of Requests Received					
Date	Client's name, address and phone number	Job Number	Requests	Volunteer appointed, initials & date allocated	Date Completed & initials

## h

## Volunteer Availability

This list will help the duty officer make contact with the volunteers so that they can give the right help at the right time of day. An up to date list should be kept in the duty officer's pack.

Name & Phone No.	Type of help volunteered	Times am	Times pm



## Volunteers' Guidelines

### Helping you to help your community

Volunteering is a highly rewarding activity because it:

- Benefits the individual volunteer
- Benefits the people who use the scheme
- Benefits wider society as we become increasingly socially responsible and caring

These volunteer guidelines have been written to encourage safe and enjoyable volunteering, but are not intended to be a comprehensive list of do's and don'ts.

Once you have read through the guidelines you should keep them in a safe place for future reference. If you experience any problems as a volunteer you should contact your scheme's organiser or duty officer. If they are unable to help you contact your local volunteer centre for advice. These are: Yate, Thornbury, Patchway and Kingswood.

Volunteer Centre Yate  
Tel: 01454 324102

Volunteer Centre Thornbury  
Tel: 01454 413392

Patchway, Filton and the Stokes Volunteer Centre  
Tel: 01454 868986

Volunteering Kingswood  
Tel: 0117 960 0376

Remember – it is very unlikely that you will encounter any serious problems while volunteering, but it is common sense to be alert to any potential risks or hazards that could cause harm.

It may be possible for CVS South Gloucestershire to organise appropriate training to help volunteers to deal with tasks confidently and successfully, leading to a sense of achievement and fulfilment.

### Working with People and Home Visits

Make sure you know all the details about the task being requested before you accept the job. Be sure you know what will be expected of you by the client. Make sure you have noted the client's address and phone number. You can use the Volunteer Record of Requests to help you do this.

- When home visiting always show your identity card if you have one.
- Explain clearly who you are and why you have come – the organiser will have told the client who to expect.
- The duty officer may need to contact you whilst you're volunteering so you should always have a mobile phone with you.
- You could ask the duty officer if you could be accompanied by another volunteer on your first visit if you feel nervous.
- Always request that the client makes future requests through the scheme's mobile phone number.
- Don't give your personal phone number or address to people.
- Do not accept inappropriate behaviour (comments or physical contact) and report any incidents to the duty officer.
- Unless you feel comfortable avoid being left alone in the house with a client. Leave if you feel unsafe. If you feel uncomfortable ask your duty officer not to send you there again and say why.
- If you are concerned about the client always tell your duty officer.
- If a client has a fall while you are there and is unable to get up by themselves, do not attempt to move or lift them. Make the client as comfortable as possible and call 999. Paramedics are trained to check for injuries and to lift people correctly.
- Contact the duty officer either by phone or by recording the information on Volunteer Record of Requests when you have completed a job. You will need to agree when this information will be shared with the duty officer.

### Working Outside and Doing Odd Jobs

Please make sure you know how to operate any equipment or machinery correctly and do not use any equipment that appears to be dangerous. Report it to the duty officer. Make sure you wear appropriate clothing such as safety goggles, boots and gloves.

- Be very careful when lifting. Only lift or carry items that you can easily manage. Use a wheelbarrow or trolley if available. If in doubt do not attempt the lift but seek assistance.
- Be very careful when using ladders. Make sure you know how to put a ladder up correctly and place the ladder so that it won't slip.
- Be very careful when handling solvents, bleach or cleaning liquids. Wear protective gloves and always wash your hands afterwards.

### Beware of Accidents

- If you have an accident during the course of volunteering you must inform your duty officer in writing immediately.
- If you are injured or feel unwell see your doctor. He or she will be able to provide an independent record of any injury.
- Providing the injury was not caused through your own negligence you may be able to make a claim through the scheme's insurance policy.
- If the accident is serious and you are not happy with the response from the scheme you can contact the Health and Safety Executive helpline number on 0541 545 500.

## Driving and Providing Lifts

Please make sure your car is in a roadworthy condition and that it is correctly taxed and insured, with a current MOT certificate if the car is more than 3 years old. Volunteer driving does not increase your car insurance premium. This was agreed by the members of the Association of British Insurers in 1984.

- Make sure you are clear about where you are taking the client.
- Make sure that you and your passenger are wearing seat belts.
- Make sure that you park in a designated parking space or zone and pay a parking fee if required.
- Any mileage (40p per mile) payment and parking fees must be paid by the person using the scheme. You should make this clear and agree whether mileage is logged is from the driver's home or the home of the person using the scheme home before setting out on the journey.
- Before taking the task you should agree with your duty officer whether or not you will be required to wait during the client's appointment.
- Make sure that you have plenty of fuel before starting a journey.
- Make regular checks on tyres, lights, seatbelts, windscreen wipers and engine coolant levels. A professional mechanic should make regular checks on your car's brakes and steering.
- Take your mobile phone with you if you have one.
- Be sure to notify the duty officer when you have completed the journey.
- If you are unsure about helping older passengers into and out of the car consider taking a Community Car Driving course.

j

## Volunteers Introductory Letter

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you very much for offering to volunteer for your area's Good Neighbours Network. The organising committee is confident that by pulling together we will be able to make a real difference to the quality of life of our area.

We are pleased to supply you with a Volunteer Information Pack. Please read through it carefully and then keep it in a safe place for future reference. You will need to return form [c volunteer information](#) to the organising committee.

Yours sincerely  
Good Neighbours Network

# k

## What to Include in a Volunteers Information Pack

Each volunteer will need a pack of information to enable them to help residents. This could include:

- A letter of welcome (see j)
- Form c volunteer information
- Details about the scheme, how it works, the co-ordinators names & contact numbers
- General information about the area
- A directory of useful phone numbers
- A directory of local services/clubs
- Safeguarding leaflets
- Information on local businesses for example shops & services available locally
- Information on doctors and hospitals
- Information on the local transport system
- A copy of the local community or parish newsletter, magazine or email
- South Gloucestershire Council Directory of Services and Information
- Information on any local or community websites
- A map of the parish/district

# l

## Volunteer Record Sheet

For the scheme to work well you will need to record all of the jobs you have been asked to attend and what happened. You need to agree when you will give the duty officer this information. It may be at the end of each task or at another agreed time.

Record of Requests					
Date	Client's name, address and phone number	Job Number	Requests	What actions were taken	Date Completed

## Risk Assessment of CRB Check Following a Disclosure

A previous criminal conviction may not automatically disqualify anyone wanting to be a volunteer. However the steering group will need to assess whether any risks are posed. The following risk assessment form should be used if a volunteer discloses a conviction or when a CRB disclosure check reveals undisclosed convictions.

This risk assessment model is based upon guidance from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. It can be used to guide you to investigate the legal position, to consider any evidence of the risk and to investigate whether you can establish a way of working so that this is not an issue. You will need to record all of your assessments for each disclosure as well as recording your decision.

Name volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Assessor \_\_\_\_\_

Risk Criteria	Descriptions
Does the volunteer have one to one contact with children or other vulnerable groups?	It is illegal to employ some offenders in regulated positions with children and vulnerable adults
To what extent are you bound by other legal constraints?	Employing people with motoring convictions such as dangerous driving as drivers
What level of supervision will the volunteer receive?	How will this reduce opportunities to re-offend
Does the volunteer have any direct responsibility for finance or items of value?	What could happen, how serious could this be and what reasonable safeguards could be put in place to reduce the risk
Does the volunteer have any direct contact with the public?	
Will the nature of the task present any opportunities for the post holder to re-offend in the course of work?	
How serious was the offence, how relevant is it to the safety of person being visited and property?	
How long ago did the offence take place?	The age at which the offence took place might be a relevant consideration
Was there a one-off offence or a history of offending?	As above
Does the volunteer offer any relevant explanation about the circumstances that led to the offending (domestic situation, finances)	
Have there been any changes in circumstances since the offending that might reduce the likelihood of further offending?	
The degree of remorse expressed and evidence of the individual's motivation to change.	
Has the offence been de-criminalised?	
The country in which the offence was committed. Some activities are criminal in some countries but not in others	

Decision taken \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

For more information: [www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk)

good**neighbours** network



For more information about the good neighbours network please contact the community engagement officer

Tel: **01454 868267**

or email: **[cchengagement@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:cchengagement@southglos.gov.uk)**

**[www.southglos.gov.uk/goodneighbours](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/goodneighbours)**